

SPANISH FIGHT LIKE SAVAGES.

"Their Victory Decisive Whenever They Find a Cuban Hospital," Says Colonel Money.

The Representative Describes for the Journal the Frightful Atrocities Committed in the Island.

Wounded Cuban Prisoners Butchered with Machetes. Insurgents Certain to Triumph in the End. Spain's Treasury Empty.

By Hernando De Soto Money.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 11.—It has come to my notice in papers that some suppose—at least they print—that I went to Cuba on the occasion of my visit for the Cuban Junta. I want to correct this apprehension. I went for my own personal and official information, nothing more, and, as a matter of fact, never, to my knowledge, met or talked with any member of the Cuban Junta.

My visit has completely convinced me that the Spanish cannot end this war; that Weyler must finally be obliged to leave the island; that Spain's rule in Cuba is to end, and that Cuban independence, whether near or far, is at last finally sure. This view, too, is shared by General Lee and hundreds of English and American onlookers whom I met in Cuba. Their opinion is of much more worth than my own, and because their opinions in that behalf coincide with mine I feel more than ever convinced that my conclusions are correct.

I have returned, convinced fully of ultimate Cuban success—a conviction, by the way, I by no means carried to Havana with me, and I want to state emphatically that I have nothing whatever to do with the Cubans or the Cuban cause more than to form the estimates which I have indicated.

In this letter I will tell you in detail of the Spanish army as I saw it, and give you at length my estimate of what force Spain is exerting and will hereafter exert, against the Cubans. It is upon what follows that I base one-half of my belief of final Cuban victory.

Weyler a Man of Courage.

Yesterday I said that a high personal estimate should be placed upon Weyler. He impressed me as a soldier of courage, genius and fertility. More than all, he is a man of great energy; thinks and acts like lightning. Of his methods, whether they be cruel or mild, savage or civilized, I will speak in a letter later on.

There is this criticism, however, which might be made of Weyler's methods here, as having an effect to weaken Spanish force in Cuba. He seems to have a fashion of forcing out Spanish troops to rich planters and others who fear themselves threatened by the insurgents. It may be, too, that they fear themselves equally threatened by the Spanish, and so hire a regiment of Weyler to garrison their places. I mentioned yesterday that the Marquis de Apezteguia pays General Weyler, as I am credibly informed, \$20,000 a month to guard his place with a garrison of about a thousand or twelve hundred men. There are a score or more rich Cubans in the same boat with the Marquis de Apezteguia. General Weyler furnishes the garrisons and they pay for them with rations and about \$20 per month per man. I do not know where this money goes. It is paid by the planters to the Spanish authorities in Havana.

But these subtractions from Weyler's forces weaken him. It is probable that fully 20,000 of his men are thus employed in private garrison duty. They can't chase the insurgents, and as the insurgents know where they are full well, the two forces never meet. The insurgents, however, frequently ravage the very plantations where Weyler's garrisons are on duty at the house. They levy blackmail, as it were, on the very planters Weyler's soldiers are guarding. The result is the poor planters, to save their houses, pay Weyler, and to save their fields the insurgents, and so it turns out both sides keep them bleeding.

Spanish Armies in Cuba.

But to get down to Spanish strength and, inferentially, to her ability to reconquer Cuba now in arms. The Spanish armies in Spain and abroad have a total of 391,500 regulars. Of these 200,000 are supposed to be in Cuba. 128,000 in Spain, 50,000 in the Philippines, 7,500 in Puerto Rico, and 6,000 in Morocco. In addition to the 200,000 regulars in Cuba, Spain has about 100,000 militia and guerrillas—50,000 more.

With these 300,000 troops, or what of them, after the men on private duty are subtracted, to those in hospitals, Weyler



occupies the big towns of the island. The country regions are left entirely to the insurgents, who raid the country and tax the people up to the very gates of Havana itself.

The insurgents are so close to Havana that their emissaries hold nightly communication with people in the city. So long as the insurgents stay off the main highways they are apparently safe from ever meeting Spanish troops.

One of Weyler's military movements consists simply in riding out of Havana on one road and riding back on another.

To the right and the left houses are burned and looted when the inmates are suspected of sympathy with the insurgents. The Spanish troops also make tremendous slaughter among the pacificos, or non-combatants, but they never leave the road to scour the country after bodies of armed insurgents, and the latter meet them and fight them, or avoid them and laugh at them at will.

Reports of Bogus Victories.

The reports of Spanish victories over insurgents are more apt to be gaudy than true. One instance was called to my attention while in Havana. A Spanish captain and his company had had a brush with some insurgents who were in possession of a stone house. The Spaniards protected themselves with a ditch at the side of the road and fired on the insurgents, who returned the compliment. This was kept up until some of the insurgents were observed to retreat. The Spanish then started to advance toward the house, when a body of insurgents who had remained behind for that purpose fired on them, wounding one or two, and the Spanish hastily scrambled back into their ditch again. The retreat was an insurgent trick.

Finally all the insurgents apparently left the house and the firing ceased. The Spanish officer in command returned to Havana with his men and reported forty insurgents killed. An American who knew him interviewed him touching this mortuary statement.

"After the firing was over did you go up to the stone house?" asked the American.

"No, no," replied the Spanish officer, his tones a mixture of horror and con-

"The Spanish hastily scrambled into their ditch again"



"The Spanish victory is decisive whenever they find an insurgent hospital"

tempt that any man would broach such an idea. "No, no; it was as much as a man's life was worth to try it. These renegade insurgents make believe to retreat. They leave behind men who would shoot you at once if you appeared. No, indeed; we did not go near the house."

"And yet you say you killed forty men?"

"Yes, fully forty," replied the officer, confidently.

"But," continued the American who did the interviewing, "if you did not go up to the house where the insurgents had been, you could not possibly have seen or counted the dead."

Counted Their Cartridges.

"True," replied the Spanish officer, with much composure, "but we counted our cartridges after the firing. We fired a great many times. We must surely have killed at least forty."

This story was told me as absolutely true by a very worthy gentleman of high position; his word is not to be doubted. I cannot give his name, for the same reason that I cannot give the names of other Americans and English and Cubans with whom I conversed. They assured me that to mention their names in connection with any story to Spanish detriment would assuredly mean the destruction of their property, and most likely their lives. It is for that reason I must keep my authority in the background.

They are utterly undrilled, and the army lacks in organization. Their commissariat is wretched—almost as bad as none at all. I asked one day in Havana to be shown the Spanish drill ground. I desired to see a Spanish drill. The American I spoke to looked at me in astonishment.

"The Spanish never drill," said he. Later I asked General Lee for information on that point. He said he had never heard of any of Weyler's troops drilling. A gentleman told me a story on that occasion.

Ignorance of Spanish Troops. "I was breakfasting with a Spanish officer recently," said this gentleman. "After we were through our breakfast and I was inclined to sit down to coffee and cigars, he begged my pardon, and told me that he must excuse himself

that morning. He said that he had orders to leave Havana that night; that he expected to have a conflict with the insurgents, and that he must devote the day to teaching his troops how to load their guns.

This story sounds ridiculous enough of soldiers in the field, but its truth is vouched for, and I have not myself the slightest doubt of it.

Another matter which has injured the Spanish cause in Cuba is the cruelty and savage inhumanity of their methods. They never take prisoners. They butcher the wounded of the enemy with their machetes on the field of battle. Every insurgent is killed who can't get away. Weyler makes no secret of this. The Spanish policy would seem to be one of extermination.

An English gentleman at Havana, becoming shocked at the atrocious method of the Spanish and their butchery of wounded rebels, went to Weyler and offered at his own expense to found a Red Cross Society to accompany the Spanish troops to the field as hospital people. The Englishman offered to pay all expenses and to take care of the wounded of both sides with equal

I paid it a visit and found sick and wounded soldiers there in great numbers. I did not enter the building, but saw many of the inmates. The story of the hospital was freely told me by physicians and people in charge. They told of it in a glibless way, as if they saw nothing astonishing or untoward in the system. They said it was one of the common hospitals, where men wounded and men sick of any and all diseases were received. There was no separation of maladies. Yellow fever, peludic fever, smallpox, rheumatism patients were all mixed up with men suffering from wounds.

A man with a bullet through his knee occupied the cot next to one suffering from smallpox. By the time his knee might be well he was in the raging midst of smallpox, and while escaping one malady took another and died. The hospital is very evidently killing more than it cures, and the death rate each day was a fearful thing to see.

In this and the other Spanish hospitals, all of which are misnamed or mismanaged in the same ignorant fashion, there are in the aggregate fully 20,000 of Weyler's men. They might as well all be deducted from Spain's fighting strength in Cuba. They will never take the field again in this rebellion.

Continuing on Weyler's hospital methods, I might say that it is the invariable Spanish custom to destroy insurgent hospitals wherever they find them. They cut down the nurses, the doctors, and kill the patients in their cots. They make a clean sweep. The Spanish victory is decisive whenever they find an insurgent hospital.

I have endeavored to relate the inane listlessness of spirit as well as the undrilled and ineffectual character of the Spanish troops. What I have said refers to the privates in Weyler's army, but if all that is said of the officers be true, it would make but little difference what sort of men they commanded. The general impression is that plunder and pillage is the main purpose of most of them. Putting down the insurrection is merely incidental; filling their pockets, so I am informed, by a system of loot and plunder, is the

Now let me say something about Spain's financial strength and her resources. It should be borne in mind that this rebellion in Cuba is costing Spain \$10,000,000 a month. Every week while the insurgent flag floats it floats at an expense to Spain of two millions and a half of dollars. How long can she stand it? The answer to that question will go largely toward settling the date of that ultimate Cuban success which I prophesied.

While the insurrection costs Spain \$10,000,000 a month, and while she never received more than \$28,000,000 annually from Cuba, her income in the island now is by the very fact of the insurrection tremendously diminished. Tobacco and sugar are Cuban staples upon which Spain leaned heavily for her Cuban contributions in days of peace gone by. What is the present status of tobacco and sugar in Cuba?

The Cuban Crops.

This year the tobacco crop will be about 80,000 bales, half of that from the celebrated district of Vuelta Abajo, which raises the finest tobacco, and the other half from the island generally, as against 500,000 bales in 1895; and the output of sugar will be anywhere from 100,000 to 150,000 tons, as against 1,100,000 tons in 1894. In Matanzas and Havana the sugar cane fields are on fire now, and the planters are afraid to cut and grind for fear of the destruction of their mills. So there will be little revenue derived from the island itself while carrying on the war.

Besides the military expenditure in Cuba, which, as I stated, is about \$10,000,000 per month, there is the further expenditure in the Philippines to put down the insurrection there, which threatens ultimately to involve Spain in war with Japan.

Spain's last loan of eighty millions was an internal loan. It was refused by the foreign bankers. The Spanish banks, however, developed an unexpected strength in their reserves and took the loan, which was secured to them by a pledge of the customs revenue. I have, but not at hand conveniently, a list of the subscriptions made to that loan by the respective citizens of Spain, and what percentage of the circulation of these cities the loan constituted.



impartiality. Weyler cut him short. "No," said he, "we want no Red Cross Society. We will dispatch the wounded rebels as they deserve. They are traitors and deserve death. As for my own wounded, I can take care of them myself."

On this subject of hospital service and Weyler's arrangements to take care of his sick and wounded I have a word to say. I might add here that right now smallpox is epidemic in Havana and in the country round about. I was myself immediately given an option when I arrived of being vaccinated or arrested. I was not arrested.

Weyler's Hospital Service.

But to return to Weyler's hospital service. There is one of the Spanish hospitals across the bay from Havana.

main purpose for which they strive.

Ignorant Braggarts. It would amuse Americans, however, to listen to the clap-trap gabble of some of the Spanish officers of inferior grade. The possibility of a war with the United States is a frequent subject of discussion with these gentry. And they would seem to hold us in vile repute as fighters. They unhesitatingly declare that 10,000 Spanish troops could easily capture all of the principal cities on the Atlantic coast, which they say would end the war. This valuable opinion comes from Spanish officers who, with 200,000 effective troops in Cuba, are utterly unable to corral, capture or cope with a scattered aggregate of 40,000 insurgents. It speaks well for the unintelligent braggadocio of these same Spanish officers.

By the middle of the coming February this loan will be entirely exhausted. Spain can doubtless then make another loan of fifty millions, and it is barely possible, a third loan of fifty millions more, by appeals through the priesthood, the press and public meetings to the patriotism and pride of the people. This last third loan, however, is highly problematic, but even

Continued on Seventh Page.

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